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ABSTRACT

This book presents findings of a study that explored the changing role of the high school principal. Data were gathered from principals and central-office personnel through interviews in more than 150 high schools in 23 states and 7 countries. Following the introductory chapter, chapter 2 describes the autonomy of the principal's school-site decision making in areas of personnel, curriculum, and budgets. In chapter 3 the role of the principal as a change agent in the arenas of instruction, school improvement, and restructuring is examined. Chapter 4 focuses on the principal's role as a leader, motivator, and supporter of teachers, describing strategies for motivating teachers, structures for participative decision-making, and the status of teacher empowerment in the schools. Suggestions for interacting with students are presented in chapter 5, which stresses the importance of student success and creating a safe, orderly campus. The principal's role as a community leader is discussed in chapter 6, with a focus on reaching out to the community and involving businesses in the school. The final chapter offers several proposals: (1) site-based management should become a part of school governance; (2) principals and teachers should discuss changing roles and responsibilities; (3) the principal should develop a coherent personal management style based on personal strengths; (4) each school should have an organized plan for instructional improvement and innovation; (5) the central office must work with principals in establishing new relationships; (6) the principal, district, and teachers must work with unions to ensure that contracts are flexible enough to meet local needs; (7) schools must continue to reach out to all segments of the community; and (8) schools and universities should work closely together on research, planning, training, and evaluation. (LMI)

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